

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4003

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to evaluate resources in the Hudson River Valley in the State of New York to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the site as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 3, 2009

Mr. HINCHEY (for himself, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. ENGEL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to evaluate resources in the Hudson River Valley in the State of New York to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the site as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Hudson River Valley
5 Special Resource Study Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of the Interior.

3 (2) STUDY AREA.—The term “study area”—
4 (A) means the portion of the Hudson River
5 that flows from Rodgers Island at Fort Edward
6 to the southern-most boundary of Westchester
7 County, New York; and

8 (B) includes any relevant sites and land-
9 scapes within the counties in New York that
10 abut the area described in subparagraph (A).

11 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

12 Congress finds as follows:

13 (1) The Hudson River Valley possesses impor-
14 tant and unique cultural, historical, natural, rec-
15 reational and scenic resources that have been central
16 to the development and sustainment of our Nation.

17 (2) The Hudson River Valley encompasses a
18 rich array of sensitive natural resources ranging
19 from the River itself and its vast estuarine district,
20 to its wetlands, refuges, parks, forests, farmlands,
21 preserves, cliffs, mountains and valleys.

22 (3) The Hudson River and its tributaries are
23 home to a number of rare and threatened animal
24 species, habitats, and plants.

1 (4) The Hudson River Valley is home to myriad
2 biking, heritage, pedestrian and scenic trail systems
3 on the eastern and western sides of the River that
4 are now connected by the Walkway Over the Hudson
5 bridge, which has been designated as a National
6 Recreation Trail.

7 (5) Throughout history, the Hudson River Val-
8 ley has played a central role in the development of
9 our nation, starting from the vibrant Native Amer-
10 ican communities that first inhabited the land, to
11 Henry Hudson's voyage up the river later named for
12 him in the vessel Half Moon in 1609 and later with
13 the American Revolution, the debate on our Con-
14 stitution, the first successful steamboat voyage by
15 Robert Fulton in 1807, the Industrial Revolution,
16 and the modern labor and environmental move-
17 ments.

18 (6) The Hudson River Valley gave birth to im-
19 portant movements in American art, architecture
20 and literature through the work of Andrew Jackson
21 Downing, Alexander Jackson Davis, Thomas Cole,
22 Frederick Church and their associates from the
23 Hudson River School of Art, as well as through au-
24 thors such as Washington Irving, James Fenimore

1 Cooper, William Cullen Bryant, Susan and Anna
2 Warner, and John Burroughs.

3 (7) The depictions and descriptions of the Hud-
4 son River Valley’s renowned scenery and natural re-
5 sources played a central role in the recognition of
6 the value of the landscape and the development of
7 an American esthetic and environmental ideal.

8 (8) A 1996 National Park Service study called
9 the Hudson River Valley “the landscape that defined
10 America.”

11 (9) The Hudson River Valley has been the sub-
12 ject of multiple State and Federal inventories, stud-
13 ies, and plans that should greatly assist a National
14 Park Service special resource study.

15 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF STUDY.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—As soon as funds are made avail-
17 able for this purpose, the Secretary shall complete a study
18 of the Hudson River Valley in the State of New York to
19 evaluate—

20 (1) the national significance of the area; and

21 (2) the suitability and feasibility of designating
22 the area as a unit of the National Park System.

23 (b) STUDY GUIDELINES.—In conducting the study
24 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

1 (1) use the criteria for the study of areas for
2 potential inclusion in the National Park System in-
3 cluded in section 8 of Public Law 91–383, as
4 amended by section 303 of the National Parks Om-
5 nibus Management Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–
6 391; 112 Stat. 3501); and

7 (2) closely examine park unit models, in par-
8 ticular national river and recreation areas, as well as
9 other landscape protection models, that—

10 (A) encompass large areas of non-Federal
11 lands within their designated boundaries;

12 (B) foster public and private collaborative
13 arrangements for achieving National Park Serv-
14 ice objectives; and

15 (C) protect and respect the rights of pri-
16 vate land owners.

17 **SEC. 5. REPORT.**

18 Not later than 24 months after the date that funds
19 are first made available for this purpose, the Secretary
20 shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Re-
21 sources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Re-
22 sources of the House of Representatives a report on the
23 findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study
24 authorized by this Act.

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